

FITNESS

Tips for Weight Loss and Maintenance

Have you decided to start eating healthier and become more physically active? Have you realized that healthy choices have a positive impact not only on you, but also on those around you?

Whether your goal is to lose weight or maintain your current healthy weight, here are some tips to help you achieve that goal. Remember, to maintain weight, you must balance calories with the energy you burn through physical activity. If you eat more than you expend, you gain weight. If you eat less (reduce calories) than you expend, you lose weight!

Weight Management Tips:

1. **Make healthy choices a habit.** This leads to a healthy lifestyle! Make a commitment to eat well, move more, and get support from family and friends. Or, better yet, start eating healthier and being active together!
2. **Remember to be realistic about your goals.** If you reduce the calories, fat, saturated fat and sugar in your diet and become physically active, you will see drastic changes in your appearance and health status. However, it is important to set realistic health goals that will allow you to succeed. The key is to set goals that are challenging and will benefit your health. Avoid setting unrealistic goals that will set you up for failure and make you want to quit.
3. **Conduct an inventory of your meal/snack and physical activity patterns.** Keep a food and activity journal. Write down not only what you ate, but where, when, and what you were feeling at the time. You will see what triggers your hunger and what satisfies your appetite. For which foods do you routinely shop? What snacks do you keep in the pantry?
4. **Eat at least 5 servings of vegetables and fruits per day.** If you're adding fruits and vegetables to your diet, try substituting them for higher calorie, less nutritious foods.
5. **Eat foods that are high in fiber to help you feel full.** Whole grain cereals, legumes (lentils and beans), vegetables and fruits are good sources of fiber that may help you feel full with fewer calories.
6. **Choose snacks that are nutritious and filling.** A piece of fresh fruit, sliced raw vegetables or a container of low-fat yogurt are excellent (and portable) choices to tide you over until mealtimes. Take these snacks with you for a healthy alternative to chips, cookies, or candy.

